

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 189996

22

ORIGIN DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 H-02 DODE-00 CIAE-00

PM-04 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 /082 R

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DOD/ISA - DR. SHIELDS (INFO)

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R 310134Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

JCRC BARBERS PT

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, VS, VN

SUBJECT: LEAGUE OF FAMILIES AND SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIA'S

REF: VIENTIANE 1806 (NOTAL)

1. AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON 22-25 JULY THE
LEAGUE OF FAMILIES REAFFIRMED ITS CONCERN AT THE LACK OF
ACCOUNTING FOR MIA'S IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. CHAIRMAN MONTGOMERY
OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE DISMAYED MANY OF THE FAMILIES WITH
HIS REMARKS CASTING DOUBT ON THE LEAGUE'S PROCLAIMED HOPE
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PAGE 02 STATE 189996

THAT SOME OF THE MIA'S ARE ALIVE. MONTGOMERY ALSO THOUGHT

THE SELECT COMMITTEE COULD COMPLETE ITS WORK BY SEPT. 11, BUT OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO ADDRESSED CONVENTION DID NOT SUPPORT THE CHAIRMAN'S BLEAK ASSESSMENT AND WON OVATIONS FOR PLEDGES TO CONTINUE THE COMMITTEE "UNTIL WE GET AN ACCOUNTING FROM THE VIETNAMESE."

2. THE COMMITTEE SUBSEQUENTLY VOTED ON JULY 28 TO SEEK AN EXTENSION OF ITS TENURE UNTIL THE END OF THE CALENDAR YEAR.

3. PRESIDENT FORD SPOKE AT THE SATURDAY EVENING BANQUET AND RECEIVED STANDING OVATIONS FOR HIS PLEDGES ON THIS SUBJECT. STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE AT THE TRADITIONAL "OPEN FORUM" AND ANSWERED NUMEROUS QUESTIONS ON NVN'S EFFORTS TO USE THE MIA'S TO BARGAIN FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, UN MEMBERSHIP AND DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION.

4. COMMENT: REPEATEDLY DURING THE THREE DAY MEETING MEMBERS AND LEADERS OF THE LEAGUE REFERRED TO THIS AS THEIR "LAST" CONVENTION. THE CRITICAL RECEPTION ACCORDED CHAIRMAN MONTGOMERY AS WELL AS THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED (INCLUDING ONE CALLING FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER'S RESIGNATION) REFLECT THE GROUP'S DESPERATION IN THE FACE OF WHAT THEY SEE AS A VANISHING CHANCE THAT ANY OF THEIR MEN ARE ALIVE OR THAT ANY SUBSTANTIAL ACCOUNTING WILL BE OBTAINED FOR MANY OF THEM.

5. TEXTS OF PRESIDENT'S AND MONTGOMERY'S REMARKS TO LEAGUE, AND OF UNDERSECRETARY HABIB'S STATEMENT TO SELECT COMMITTEE JULY 21 ARE BEING POUCHED TO VIENTIANE, BANGKOK AND PARIS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MIA, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE189996
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FASIEVERTS:JS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760296-0629
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976071/aaaaaapf.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN DPW
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 VIENTIANE 1806
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEAGUE OF FAMILIES AND SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIA'S
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, VS, VN, US, LEAGUE OF FAMILIES, (MONTGOMERY, G V)
To: VIENTIANE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006